Amendments To The Specification:

Please replace the paragraph at page 1, line 32 through page 2, line 2 with the following:

In many of these applications, PC hardware and industry-standard software ~~performs~~ perform mission critical tasks involving significant stakes and low tolerance for failure. In these environments, even a single short-lived failure of a PC component can represent a significant financial event for its owner.

Please replace the paragraph at page 6, lines 3-21 with the following:

Referring first to FIG. 1, a block diagram is shown illustrating a hybrid switching architecture implemented in a computer system 100, an embodiment of the present invention. Shown is a first single board computer (SBC) 102 coupled through a hybrid switching module (HSM) 104 to a PCI or CPCI backplane bus 106. Coupled to the PCI or CPCI backplane bus 106 are a plurality of PCI or CPCI peripheral slots 108, into which PCI or CPCI peripheral cards can be inserted, and user CPCI [[year]] rear input/output devices 110. Also coupled to the hybrid switching module 104 is an I/O link 112, which couples to a second hybrid switching module 114. The second hybrid switching module is connected to a second single board computer (SBC) 116, and also to a second PCI or CPCI backplane bus 118. Coupled to the second PCI or CPCI backplane bus 118 are a second plurality of PCI or CPCI peripheral slots 120, into which PCI peripheral cards (not shown) can be inserted, and second user CPCI rear input/output devices 122.

Please replace the paragraph at page 7, line 27 through page 8, line 3 with the following:

Because each of the single board computers 102, 116 is able to connect to each of the PCI Peripheral slots 108,120 and each of the user PCI input/output devices 110, 122 ~~in the~~ a tremendous amount of functionality is available to the user of the computer

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system. For example, in an eight-way multi-computing configuration, eight-way point-to-point connectivity and redundancy is enabled by the present embodiment. The same connectivity can be applied directly as I/O chassis connectivity as the industry migrates into point-to-point architecture.

Please replace the paragraph at page 8, lines 4-16 with the following:

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As shown by way of illustration, two single board computers, two hybrid switching modules, two PCI backplane busses, two sets of PCI peripheral slots and two sets of user PCI input/output devices are employed in the present embodiment. However, as will be appreciated by a person of ordinary skill in the art, the teachings at the present embodiment can be expanded to any member N of such components, wherein the I/O link [[120]] 112 links all of the hybrid switching modules together, and allows each of N single board computers to communicate with each of N PCI backplane buses and each of the other single board computers via respective pairs of hybrid switching modules.

Please replace the paragraph at page 8, line 26 through page 9, line 2 with the following:

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Shown is a single board computer 210 coupled to a first hybrid switching module 214, and a second single board computer 212 coupled to a second hybrid switching module 216. The first hybrid switching module 214 and the second hybrid switching module 216 are coupled together through an I/O link 218 and are each coupled to respective PCI backplane buses 206, 208. The respective PCI backplane buses 206, 208 are coupled respectively to PCI peripheral slots and user PCI or CPCI input/output devices 220, 222.